

## IN FLORIDA, THE TEACHERS AND FIRST RESPONDERS BACK TO WORK ACT WILL PROVIDE \$1.67 BILLION IN FUNDS TO SUPPORT UP TO 25,900 EDUCATOR JOBS

*The Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act will save or create nearly 400,000 education jobs through critical investments in the education of our nation's children. Specifically, The Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act will invest \$30 billion to support state and local efforts to retain, rehire, and hire early childhood, elementary, and secondary educators. Facing a \$3.7 billion projected budget shortfall in 2012, cuts to state and local spending on education will place thousands of Florida teacher jobs at risk. The Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act will provide Florida with an additional \$1.67 billion in funds that will support 25,900 education jobs, provide a jolt to the state economy, and improve the quality of education. By asking millionaires to pay their fair share, The Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act will grow the Florida economy without adding a dime to the deficit.*

**Florida Budget Shortfall Forced State To Slash Education Spending by 18.1 Percent.** As a result of the most severe fiscal crisis since the Great Depression, Florida faced a budget shortfall of \$3.7 billion in 2011, a staggering 11.5% of the state's General Fund. Given the dramatic reduction in state revenue, the state was forced to slash funding for educational programs and services. In Florida, elementary and high schools are currently receiving 18.1% less state funding this year than in 2008. [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [6/17/11](#); Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [10/7/11](#)]

**In Florida, 25,600 Local Government Jobs Have Been Lost Since 2008, Including Teachers.** Given Florida's cuts to education programs, local school districts are forced to cut back on educational programs and services, often laying-off needed teachers and other critical staff, or raising additional revenue to cover the shortfall. As a result, local government employment fell by 25,600 in Florida, showing that teachers, police, firefighters, and other public employees faced layoffs. These unprecedented layoffs extended the recession and have slowed the recovery in Florida. [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [10/7/11](#); U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed on [10/14/11](#)]

**With Fewer Teachers and Resources, Florida School Systems Make Choices That Impact the Learning Environment for Students.** "Public schools are being squeezed by state budget cuts and an unexpected increase in student enrollment, including an influx of Haitian students in the aftermath of Haiti's devastating earthquake. Districts have been coping by closing schools during breaks, cutting energy costs and changing transportation routes, but the next round of cuts is expected to hit classrooms." [National Education Association, [4/10](#)]

**Democrats Helped Florida Avoid an Even Worse Situation, Preventing Thousands of Potential Layoffs.** Without Democratic intervention in 2010, Florida school districts would have been forced to lay off as many as 5,000 teachers. Recognizing the financial difficulty that many state and local governments were experiencing, Democrats shepherded the bipartisan Education Jobs Act into law, thereby protecting 9,200 education jobs in Florida. Unfortunately, thousands of teacher jobs are still at stake today. [U.S. Department of Education analysis, [8/6/10](#); National Education Association, [5/10](#)]